



File Code: 1950

Date: January 9, 2012

Dear Interested Party;

The Chugach National Forest is requesting comments on a proposed action for campsite management and development on Forest Service lands in western Prince William Sound (PWS). The proposed action described in this document will be analyzed in the Campsite Management Environmental Assessment.

Recreational use of dispersed backcountry campsites in western PWS is causing adverse impacts to natural resources. A trend of increasing user created adverse impacts is being observed by both Forest Service field staff and private researchers. These adverse impacts include: (1) soil compaction and erosion, (2) vegetation damage by both trampling and cutting out sites, (3) fire scarring, and (4) litter and human waste accumulation. Heritage resources are also at risk at some campsites which overlay culturally sensitive areas. The purpose and need of this project is to both reduce adverse environmental impacts occurring from human use at identified campsites and to provide high quality camping opportunities while maintaining wilderness values.

The proposed action is to conduct campsite management within western PWS. Management will consist of one or a combination of the following activities: (1) campsite hardening; (2) campsite improvement; and/or (3) campsite removal and restoration. These terms are described below.

Sixty-three sites have been identified for management (*see Exhibit A for a map of campsites proposed for management*). The following management activities are proposed:

- Campsite hardening and campsite improvement at 43 campsites.
- Campsite improvement at 5 campsites.
- Campsite removal and restoration at 15 campsites.

Sites were identified based on Forest Service observations of resource problems as a result of human use.

Access to the sites will be primarily by power boat. Campsite management activities will be conducted in accordance with the Minimum Requirements Analysis (MRA) described in the Alaska Region Forest Service Manual 2322.03(6).

Campsite management activities would be expected to begin during the summer of 2012 and will take place during the next six summer seasons.

#### *Campsite Hardening:*

The intent of hardening projects is to protect sensitive resources from degradation (typically organic soils) by containing human use within an established area. Sites that will receive campsite hardening are generally areas already impacted by human use. Campsite hardening will involve moving beach gravels into forested areas in order to harden wet or high use areas.



*Campsite Improvement:*

The intent of campsite improvement projects is to improve recreation experience and reduce adverse user impacts. Improvements will include installing food hang wires, signs, and/or developing boardwalk trails.

*Campsite Removal and Restoration:*

The intent of campsite removal and restoration is to remove existing campsites that threaten heritage or other natural resources. Campsite removal and restoration will involve removing fire rings, piling deadfall, and/or placing moss over disturbed areas.

**Schedule:**

If initiated this project should have NEPA completed and a decision by the ranger in spring 2012. The proposed actions would then take place over several field seasons beginning the summer of 2012. Sites identified for removal and restoration will be worked first, along with sites that have heavy impacts and receive high use. Some of the sites proposed have moderate impacts but still receive high use. These sites will be closely monitored and may not get worked for a few seasons.

Comments on this proposed action should be submitted by February 10th, 2012 and directed to Christopher Stinson at the Glacier Ranger District, PO Box 129 Girdwood AK, 99587. Email comments to [cstinson@fs.fed.us](mailto:cstinson@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Charnon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Charnon" clearly legible.

TIM CHARNON  
Glacier District Ranger

ATTACHMENT: EXHIBIT A- MAP

## Exhibit A - Map of Campsites Proposed for Mangement

- ▲ Hardening and Improvements (41)
- ▲ Removal and Restoration (15)
- + Improvements to Previously Hardened Sites (5)



